

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment Under Rule 1.116 is respectfully requested because it simplifies issues on appeal. No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this Amendment.

Status of the Claims

Claims 4-30 are pending in the application. Claim 29 has been amended to remove the phrase "about" when describing the sintering temperature range.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. 112, First Paragraph (Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Office Action)

Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants traverse.

In the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that there is insufficient support for the term "about" when describing the sintering temperature in the originally filed application. Applicants believe that this term is sufficiently supported. However, in order to simplify issues to be addressed in the forthcoming Appeal Brief, claim 29 has been amended to remove the term "about."

This rejection is overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Rejections Using Soma (Paragraphs 2-6 of the Office Action)

Claims 4, 10-13, 21, 24 and 27-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Soma (U.S. Patent No. 5,411,767). Claims 6, 8, 14-17, 22, 23, 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Soma. Claims 4-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 8-50913 in view of Soma. Applicants traverse.

Distinctions of the invention over Soma and JP 8-50913 have been placed before the Examiner. For brevity, these distinctions are not repeated here. As has been duly demonstrated, Soma neither anticipates nor suggests the invention. The combination of JP 8-50913 with Soma additionally fails to suggest the invention sufficient to allege *prima facie* obviousness.

These rejections are overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert E. Goozner, Ph.D. (Reg. No. 42,593) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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